

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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O R 201721Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY OSLO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5113
AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USNATO IMMEDIATE
SECDEF WASHDC
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USNMR SHAPE
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 OSLO 0364

SHAPE FOR POLAD

NATO FOR MR. PENDLETON

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MILI, FR, GW, NO
SUBJECT: FRG PARTICIPATION IN NATO EXERCISES IN NORWAY:
A SELF INFLICTED WOUND

1. ISSUE OF FRG PARTICIPATION IN NATO EXERCISES IN NORWAY
HAS ONCE AGAIN SURFACED IN THE NORWEGIAN PRESS AND HAS
BECOME A SUBJECT OF RATHER INTENSE INTEREST AND DISCUSSION
IN POLITICAL CIRCLES IN OSLO. THE DEBATE CENTERS AROUND
TWO QUESTIONS:
-- HAS NORWAY CHANGED ITS POLICY ON FRG PARTICIPATION?
-- IF SO, WHY?

2. BACKGROUND: BRIEFLY, NORWAY EMBARKED ON WHAT IT CALLED
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A QUOTE NORMALIZATION UNQUOTE OF ITS MILITARY RELATIONSHIP
WITH THE FRG IN 1966. THIS MEANT ESSENTIALLY FOLLOWING
A NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY VIS-A-VIS GERMAN PARTICIPATION
IN NATO EXERCISES, CISITS, AFNORTH STAFF POSITIONS, ETC.
A GRADUALLY INCREASING NUMBER OF NONCOMBATANT GERMAN
TROOPS (NO MORE THAN ABOUT 480) HAS TAKEN PART IN
VARIOUS ALLIED MANEUVERS SINCE 1966. DURING A SEPTEMBER

1976 VISIT TO NORWAY, FINISH PRESIDENT KEKKONEN CRITICIZED THE GON FOR ALLOWING THE NUMBER OF WEST GERMAN TROOPS PARTICIPATING IN EXERCISES ON NORWEGIAN SOIL TO INCREASE SAYING QUOTE THAT IT IS NOT IMMATERIAL TO FINLAND WHICH COUNTRIES NORWAY COOPERATES WITH IN THE MILITARY FIELD UNQUOTE. A FEBRUARY 1977 LEAK IN OSLO PRESS RESURRECTED THE ISSUE BY QUOTING EXTENSIVELY FROM AN MFA DOCUMENT NARRATING KEKKONEN'S UNHAPPINESS OVER FRG PARTICIPATION EXPRESSED DURING HIS SEPTEMBER VISIT. MOD HANSEN RESPONDED WITH AN INTERVIEW DURING WHICH HE SAID THAT NORWAY'S POLICY TOWARDS NORMALIZATION OF ITS MILITARY RELATIONS WITH THE FRG REMAINED UNCHANGED AND THAT THE GON HAS OUTLINED A COMPLETE PROCESS WHICH WILL LEAD TO PARTICIPATION OF SOME 1,500 GERMAN TROOPS IN A 5,000 MAN NATO ACE MOBILE FORCE EXERCISE IN 1980 IN NORWAY. THE SUBJECT REMAINED DORMANT UNTIL JANUARY 9, 1978 WHEN HANSEN DID A LESS THAN DEFT VOLTA-FACE IN A SPEECH TO THE PRESTIGIOUS MILITARY SOCIETY.

3. HAS NORWAY CHANGED ITS POLICY ON FRG PARTICIPATION? IN HIS JANUARY 9 SPEECH, HANSEN SAID BEGIN QUOTE THE QUESTION OF THE SCOPE OF THE WEST GERMAN PARTICIPATION IN EXERCISES IN NORWAY IS A QUESTION OF WHAT IS EXPEDIENT. FROM A NORWEGIAN POINT OF VIEW, WE HAVE DONE WHAT IS EXPEDIENT AND THERE ARE THEREFORE NO REASONS FOR CHANGING THE PATTERN (OF GERMAN PARTICIPATION) END QUOTE IN THE WAKE OF THE FUROR IN THE PRESS AND THE FLURRY OF CONFIDENTIAL

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CRITICAL COMMENTS BY VARIOUS POLITICAL FIGURES, THE FOREIGN MINISTER MADE A STATEMENT IN PARLIAMENT JANUARY 19 TO THE EFFECT THAT:

- WE SOUGHT TO FOLLOW A POLICY OF NONDISCRIMINATION BETWEEN FRG AND OTHER NATO ALLIES
- FRG PARTICIPATION AT WHATEVER LEVEL HAS ACHIEVED THIS
- THE FRG ITSELF HAS NO DESIRE TO PLAY A LARGE ROLE IN NORWEGIAN DEFENSE
- THIS ROLE IS RESERVED FOR THE UK, CANADA AND THE US.

4. EMBASSY OFFICERS' CONVERSATIONS WITH BOTH POLICY AND WORKING LEVEL MFA AND MOD OFFICIALS CONFIRM THAT IN FACT A LIMIT HAS BEEN PLACED ON FRG PARTICIPATION AT CURRENT LEVELS I.E. ABOUT 480 APPROXIMATELY THE NUMBER WHO WILL PARTICIPATE IN THIS YEAR'S "ARCTIC EXPRESS" EXERCISE. DEFENSE UNDER SECRETARY HOLST REINFORCED THIS CONCLUSION IN A JANUARY 19 TV INTERVIEW.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 OSLO 0364

5. WHY DID THE GON DO IT? VARIOUS MINISTRY OFFICIALS
HAVE PRIVATELY EXPRESSED TO EMBOFFS, THEIR DOUBT AS TO WHAT
POSSIBLE BENEFIT COULD BE DERIVED FROM THE REVERSAL. THEY
(AND WE) ARE ALSO PUZZLED AS TO WHY THE GOVERNMENT CHOSE TO
TAKE THE ACTION SHORTLY AFTTTR KOSYGIN'S HELSINKI DIATRIBE
AGAINST NORWAY AND FRG PARTICIPATION AND THE VISIT
TO OSLO (DECEMBER 23-24) OF DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER ZIMSKOV
DURING WHICH ZIMSKOV ALSO RAISED THE ISSUE. THE OBVIOUS
IMPLICATION (AND ONE WHICH SOCIALISTS HAVE ALREADY
MADE PUBLICLY) IS THAT THE GON CAVED TO SOVIET PRESSURE.

6. ADDING TO THE CONFUSION WAS THE INFORMATION PASSED TO AN
EMBASSY OFFICER JANUARY 20 BY AN MFA REP THAT THE CABINET
DECIDED TO CHANGE ITS POSITION ON GERMAN PARTICIPATION IN
OCTOBER OF LAST YEAR LARGELY AS THE RESULT OF PRESSURE FROM
FINLAND. IT NOT YET CLEAR WHY THE GON WAITED UNTIL

JANUARY TO ANNOUNCE THE DECISION UNLESS THEY HAD TO CLEAR IT
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